

OTHER DAYS.

The said Scotch sang, I love them weel,
See tender and so real, man,
They touch our hearts an' make us feel
As only Scots can feel, man,
They wauken thoets o' ither days,
An' scenes o' childhood saw, man,
Again we wander o'er the braes
In Scotland far awa', man.

Again by Clyde's sweet banks saw green,
Or thro' the silent grove, man,
At glomin', w' some bonnie Jean,
In memory we wae, man,
An' then their wily sparks o' fire
Oor very souls they raise, man,
Frae life's pair diggin' in the mire,
Tae sweeter, brighter days, man.

—Donald Ramsay.

A PERFECT STRANGER.

Ragusa Beach is not on the map.

When Arthur P. Devine was making a competency in "Fine Wines, Liquors and Cigars—Oysters in every style," among his best customers was one Jackman, who cheerfully spent his time and money in Mr. Devine's sample room, and shortly got into that gentleman's books to the tune of \$300. Being hard pressed and in need of further credit this Jackman made over as collateral fifty acres, more or less, of Jersey soil on the seashore and never redeemed them. When Arthur P. Devine made his competency he cast about, as is the wont of rich men, as to the best way of getting rid of it, and Jackman's fifty acres offered an eligible opportunity. He dubbed it Ragusa Beach, said \$50,000 in the Colonade hotel and as much more in laying out lots and booming the town. But there they lay—the lots—and there the hotel stood, and that was all.

There was the best beach on the Atlantic coast, prime fishing and boating and unrivaled hotel accommodations; everything except people. They went to Newport, Long Branch, Cape May, and it seemed to the despairing Devine, every resort except Ragusa Beach. It didn't "go," and nobody knew why. One man said Devine didn't have the push, another friend thought that it wanted a boom, another said: "Oh, give it time, can't you, and there was some talk about Ragusa not being built in a day. Occasionally there strayed thither an idler or an invalid, but no one came twice. One and all assured Mr. Devine that "Ragusa Beach was destined to be the leading resort when its advantages were thoroughly understood," but all that did not prevent the gentlemanly proprietor from trembling on the verge of bankruptcy.

When Mr. John Andrew Baxter came to Ragusa Beach with his wife and only daughter, he was actuated by that perversity of intellect and purpose which had gained for him the name of crank among his social acquaintances. In business circles Mr. Baxter was a model of conservatism and dealt in hardware. When speaking on the subject of mails or selling a job lot of files he was without a trace of eccentricity, and always improved the shining dollar. Out of doors he was devoid of sense and reckless alike of dollars and the opinion of the world. That's what Mrs. Baxter said.

"You know, John," said she, with pardonable acerbity, "that Vinnie is 20 and quite old enough to be married, and why you should act so strangely about it I don't know—I do hope there is no secret about your reluctance to permit Vinnie to become acquainted with those in her own circle."

For answer Mr. Baxter would shut his eyes and pursue his mouth in an aggravating and non-committal way very hard to bear. Even when Mrs. Baxter (a rotund person of easy ways) threw her natural placidity to the winds and resorted to nagging, Mr. Baxter had not deemed a reasonable explanation of his conduct. A jury of his peers might well have called it madness.

With the brightest of prospects and a well filled purse Mr. and Mrs. Baxter and Miss Baxter started out from their city house on the 1st of May to visit Saratoga. Now who goes to Saratoga in May? Of course there was no one there, and after staying until some one came, which happened to be an eligible banker, Mr. Baxter bundled his charges to the Adirondacks. Too early, of course, but he kept them there until Independence Day, and when he announced that they would next journey to the sea shore he had raised hopes to dash them to the ground by adding, "Ragusa Beach."

"Who?" cried Mrs. Baxter, raising her plump hands in despair, "ever heard of Ragusa Beach?"

"I have," replied Mr. Baxter, closing his eyes, as he always did when he anticipated an argument.

"Where is it?"

"On the coast."

"Of course," said Mrs. Baxter, keeping her temper admirably; "but, where, John? Maine or Florida?"

"Two weeks ago it was in Jersey. It is a quiet place. It is also secluded."

"So I had imagined—pray tell me, John, why is it necessary for us to go to Rag's Beach, or whatever its name is?"

"In the first place," said Baxter, "I have the strongest inclination to visit that place, and that ought to satisfy you."

"It doesn't at all," retorted Mrs. Baxter, with rising cholera. "I have the strongest inclination to visit the Branch, and so has Vinnie, and that ought to satisfy you. Suppose, John, you go to that secluded spot and we will join you, say about the middle of September."

But this Mr. Baxter wouldn't listen to. He had no "second place" to advance, but he was adamant, and Mrs. Baxter had to submit. She witnessed, with sullen resignation, her lord and master (old version) pack his trunk and purchase tickets of transportation, and then, and not till then, did she make a final effort.

"I will not appeal to your feelings as a father, John Baxter," she said, with the dignity of a Roman matron, "for I fear that you know not the meaning of the phrase; but I will descend to the vulgar level of your business interest. Vinnie—I speak plainly—Vinnie is 18—"

"Twenty."

"John," implore you to be human! Eighteen and unmarried. You say we are rich—you have repeatedly told me that a crisis would bring things to a panic with you."

"Don't meddle with business terms, dear."

"You shall not divert me, sir. This being so, is it not your duty as a man?"

"Thought you were not going to appeal to my feelings?"

"As a business man—your duty to think of your daughter's future! Suppose she should be left alone, who would accept the penniless child of a pauper parent?"

"Strong language, Jane!" roared Mr. Baxter. "Who's a pauper, I'd like to know?"

"He evades the issue!" exclaimed the dame, with hands and eyes uplifted. "Oh, heavens, that I was ever wed!"

betraying his usual lack of interest in mundane affairs not directly affecting his desk. "Fine girl, though."

"I wish there was more of her," returned Mr. Devine, with grim humor.

Mrs. Baxter regarded her new quarters with great dissatisfaction, although without reasonable cause. The Colonade had been "sumptuously furnished," and the carpets, mirrors and furniture were so fine that Arthur P. Devine groaned every time he entered a parlor. There was also a View, as Mr. Baxter bade her observe, and when she scornfully remarked that it was nothing but sand and water he crushed her with the remark that Cape May could furnish nothing better. Crushed but not convinced, she waited her sorrows, while the obstinate John went out for a walk and a bath.

"Oh, well," said Vinnie, indifferently, "it really doesn't make much difference; as pa says, the sky, air, sand and water are pretty much the same everywhere."

"But the peeps, Vinnie, where are the people?" cried her mother.

"They will come, I suppose. Pa says Mr. Devine is looking for them all the time."

The dinner, Mrs. Baxter admitted, was fair, but it was still in a gloomy frame of mind that she retired at an early hour, after sitting for forty minutes in solitary grandeur on the hotel piazza.

The third day was Sunday, and Mr. Baxter went off with a man fishing, to the great scandal of his wife.

"Vinnie and I will go to church," she announced with decision.

"No church here," said Mr. Baxter, with a cruel laugh. "Better come in the boat with Delmar and me. Jolly fellow, Delmar."

"I don't believe you," she said, severely. With Vinnie in tow, she poked around the forty odd edifices without finding a sacred one, and then sank upon the sand near a small cove, exhausted, worn out and of temper.

"Vinnie," said she, "I could cry."

"Oh, no, mamma," objected Vinnie, with some emphasis; "please don't. It's no sin not to go to church if there isn't any. Besides, I think it is delightful."

"What is?"

"The air, the water, the sky and the people."

"There are none."

"There is one. I saw him with pa."

"Saw who? Mr. Devine?"

"Nonsense! Delmar."

The elder looked at the younger severely.

"Delmar," she said, coldly.

"Permit me," returned the younger, defiantly. "When I know him it will be time enough to add 'mister.' Don't look so shocked, or I will call him Ned, as pa did."

"I might have known it," sighed Mrs. Baxter. "This place is demoralizing. No people, no church, no respect. It is in the air."

She might have said more, but Vinnie nudged her with the crook of her parasol.

"Here they come now," she said, excitedly; "pa and Delmar—Ned."

They were coming at a smart gait. A disreputable pair, wearing shabby straw hats and smoking cigars.

Mrs. Baxter had just time to notice that Delmar was a blonde, but not offensively so, tall, but not lank, with calm blue eyes. She had no time to compose her features, nor did she try.

His name was Edward Delmar, and as soon as he had fairly introduced him Baxter rattled off:

"Narrow shave—I don't know a thing about a smack, and over she went while I had the filler, and if it hadn't been for Ned you'd have been wearing black."

Mrs. Baxter screamed and at the same time tried to look shocked.

"Fishing on Sunday?"

"Never to be excused," observed Delmar, in a deep voice, "except on the ground of charity." Then he told an entertaining tale about a poor family somewhere who lived on fish, and for whom the Sunday catch was destined, and told it so well that Mrs. Baxter, experienced matron that she was, would have been deceived had she not intercepted a flagrant wink from her husband to her daughter.

Henceforth, she said she was his enemy, and the walk back to the hotel was a cold one, although the day was warm. Delmar, unabashed, escorted Vinnie, while the recalcitrant John walked by his wife's side.

Six days afterwards, the deeply injured woman said in one breath: "John Baxter, I would not for the world disturb your brutal equanimity, but I must warn you that Vinnie is in the greatest danger of being engaged to Mr. Delmar."

It is scarcely creditable, but Mr. Baxter received the information with a stolid smile.

"You don't believe it?" exclaimed Mrs. Baxter. "Good heavens!"

"Jane," said Mr. Baxter, with an offensive air of superiority, "let me explain. Delmar is a clever young man and not a fool. He can't afford to marry Vinnie, and he knows it."

"Vinnie is—shall I say rich?"

"You had better not; in the present fluctuating state of trade there is no telling. But Delmar thinks she is, and there is our safety. Jane, young men are no longer impetuous, free, open hearted and trusting as when I was a young man."

"Why, John, I am sure you never were!"

"Therefore, Jane, therefore the young men of today are not marrying rich girls on limited incomes. Delmar is a trusted clerk, trusted with everything but a large salary, and he couldn't buy Vinnie's love without cheating the butcher."

"But, John, if he loves her?"

"Hah! ha!"

"John, don't be foolish."

"John, I will speak. You have no right to assume that Vinnie or Mr. Delmar will act sensibly—men are always fools, and that flaxen wretch is no exception. You mark my words!"

"No more, Jane. You alarm me for the stability of your mind. Go read the papers, and keep posted on the progress of the age."

Yet Mrs. Baxter was right and Mr. Baxter was wrong. In spite of the size of his salary and a worldly wisdom acquired in billiard and smoking rooms, Delmar drifted into love, and Vinnie, who ought to have known better, did not check him. It may have been the white, youthful defiance, or love, or a combination of all three.

After sitting for three-quarters of an hour in silence Delmar had just taken Vinnie's other hand preparatory to saying something, when Mr. Baxter turned the corner of the red umbrella which sheltered the lovers.

"Sir!" said Delmar, rising in some perturbation.

Vinnie clasped her hands and looked heroic.

At the same time, unnoticed by the interesting trio, a fourth person was moving toward the umbrella. He was a large man of fleshy habit, with a singularly benevolent countenance and a severe head of iron gray hair. His garments were of plain black, but not eccentric in their simplicity, and he might have been taken for a pastor on a holiday, had not the jaunty roll of his hat brim and the slim cane he carried forbade the assumption.

"Sir!" said Mr. Baxter, in return. "I—confound your impudence!"

That was not what he started out to say, but heroic sentiments and rounded invective do not come with ready grace, unless the speaker is on the stage. And as for Vinnie, who, at this stage should have said, "Father, I implore you!" she said "Oh, ya!" in a silly way.

Meanwhile the man with the singularly benevolent countenance was approaching the red umbrella with slow but sure strides.

"Sir," said Delmar, in return, speaking with an artificial calmness, natural under the circumstances, "I am not aware that I have done anything to incur your displeasure. Then conscious that his language was becoming stilted, he dropped into the vernacular: 'It's this way, Mr. Baxter. When I first met Vinnie—'

"Vinnie, indeed!" roared Mr. Baxter. "Why, man, you haven't known her three weeks! She doesn't know you, I don't know you. Who are you, anyhow?"

"My name you know, sir," turning slightly pale, "and as for my antecedents, they will compare favorably with any young man in New York. My prospects, I can honestly say, are favorable."

Mr. Baxter sniffed.

"As for why I fell in love with your daughter, let me say with equal honesty that I couldn't help it." At this forcible compliment Vinnie leaned heavily against her father and murmured, "Oh! Edward!"

At this juncture the man with the benevolent countenance looked around the ribs of the umbrella and said:

"Ha! I see it all!"

Mr. Baxter turned upon the intruder with a ferocious stare.

"Who are you, sir?" he demanded.

The intruder lifted his glossy hat and made a sweeping bow which took in the assembled company, the ocean and the sky itself. Then he replaced it, and said, in a round and ringing but not unpleasant voice:

"I am a perfect stranger. I beg, sir, that you will not mistake me."

Mr. Baxter looked at Delmar, and Vinnie looked at both, and it was evident that they knew him not.

The stranger noticed the interchange of looks and smiled more blandly than before.

"In order to prevent any misconception," said he, "permit me to assure you in the strongest manner possible that I will not suddenly throw open my corkerew cutaway and disclose beneath the uniform of a major general or the vestments of a cardinal. Neither will I reveal myself at fifteen minutes past 3 as my nephew Jack, who was supposed to have gone down on the ill-fated *Murietta* in the Bay of Biscay, oh! in eighteen hundred and something two. You need not prepare yourself for any surprises; I have none to offer. I am your friend, your benefactor that is to be, but at the same time a perfect stranger."

"You amaze me!" cried Mr. Baxter, and his countenance corroborated his statement.

"I see I do," said the stranger; "it gives me pleasure." Then he wiped his brow with a snowy handkerchief and laid his hand tenderly on Vinnie's shrinking shoulder.

"It never was my good fortune to have a daughter, nor, strange to say, a son, but I can appreciate your feelings at this critical moment. Your feelings are naturally wrung, as mine would be, but I am sure you will rise above your commercial self and treat your daughter in the abstract as I would do."

Mr. Baxter was still angry, but plainly getting interested.

"As how?" he asked.

"Let me explain," said the perfect stranger. "I hold it a self evident fact that these delicate affairs of the heart (the French term does suit at present) ought to me should not be settled by the interested parties. Let me ask if any one of you three can, by any chance, strike that nice balance which is possible to a perfect stranger! You, young sir, are blindly in love, and by heaven! I envy you your blindness. You, young lady, do not know the price of beef or what it means to be restricted in your laundress bill. You, sir, are a man of affairs, who have loved all along ago that you have forgotten the sensation. If I am asked if you three are qualified to pass an opinion worth hearing, I answer, 'No.'"

Delmar couldn't restrain a smile.

"To be told," said he, "that one is not competent to manage his own affairs is not complimentary."

"Truth rarely is," retorted the stranger, with politeness, but a touch of sternness.

"Look ye, sir; if you have a pain in your chest do you consult Tom, Dick and Harry, or do you go to a doctor, who knows you as a case, and prescribes accordingly? Any you, sir, as a man of business, if you fall into the meshes of defalcation or protracted notes, do you call a caucus of your relatives or do you hire to an unimpeachable lawyer who would have taken a fee from the other side if they had gone up the steps ahead of you?"

"I begin to see your drift," observed Mr. Baxter.

"Of course you do. But I wonder. It is then admitted that the question is left for me to settle."

No one had admitted anything of the kind, but no one protested. There was a calm audacity about the stranger which silenced, if it did not convince. "We will walk along the sands," continued the stranger, "and discuss this matter further. To begin, I will ask if there is any tangible objection to this young man? Does he drink, smoke or gamble to excess? Has he a hidden wife or is he, as the six cent novelists say, under the shadow of a great crime?"

"No!" cried Delmar, violently.

"I was sure not. To the lady then, engaged to another? Has she a disreputable or an incurable malady? Is she a coquette or a fickle disposition?"

"I am sure I am not," sobbed Vinnie, clinging to Delmar in nervous indignation.

"Again I am right," said the stranger, "you, sir, then, taking the amazed but unimpeachable Baxter by the arm, 'is my lady's source. Have you destined your daughter for a convent? Have you another suit for your mind's eye? Do you know what this young man's character or your daughter's disposition?"

"No," stammered Mr. Baxter, vainly trying to evade the large and full blue eyes of the stranger, "I cannot say that I have any particular reason."

"Why, look you, sir," cried the stranger, dropping Mr. Baxter's arm, "it is as plain as a piestaff. There is no objection to the banns being published. He does not object, she

does not object, you do not object; it is a perfect conjunction of the verb to marry."

"Mrs. Baxter," said that lady's husband, uneasily, "I fear that she—"

"Ho!" cried the stranger, switching the air lightly with his cane. "You are master in your own house, if I mistake not."

The flattery was not misplaced.

"I think I am," returned Mr. Baxter, with a portentous cough.

"Then there is no more to be said. I see the hotel within speaking distance, and if I can be assured that the young folks have your blessing I will retire with the consciousness of a duty well performed."

"If you mean that I give my consent," said Mr. Baxter, still evading the eyes, "I certainly do. Perhaps I was hasty, Delmar; your hand—I was young myself once."

"Thank you, sir," said Delmar, gripping him firmly. "And you, sir—"

But the stranger merely smote the air again.

"This," said he, with a gracious smile, "would be the proper time for me to reveal myself, but alas! I have nothing to reveal. I said I was a perfect stranger and I am. Good-by."

He raised his hat again with benevolent grace and disappeared in the shades of the decorated hallway.

Mrs. Baxter was still clutching the opera glasses in her nervous hand when the trio surged in upon her and began to explain in chorus. It took three-quarters of an hour of the hardest kind of work to bring her around, but the good soul broke down at last and then animosity was supplanted by curiosity.

It was ungenerous as well as impolite, John, she said, sternly. "You might at least have brought him here for a brief period."

"I will fetch him here," said Delmar, dutifully, passing out and down to the hotel deck, accompanied by his prospective father-in-law.

"Stout gentleman, with gray hair," repeated the austere clerk. "English lord, baron or some such rank, I believe. Run down from Long Branch for two or three days and leaves on the 2:30 train."

"A lord!" exclaimed Mr. Baxter, greatly agitated. "How exasperated Jane will be when she hears that he has gone!"

"Do you mean the stout man, with the red face, who always carries a thin cane?" asked Mr. Devine, who had been concealed in a corner, counting up the day's losses. "That's not the English lord; it's a comic actor on his vacation; some sort of name like Wobble; left this afternoon, as everybody does, blast it all!"

"This places us in a dilemma," said Mr. Baxter to Delmar.

"It does," said Delmar.

"I say," cried the porter, entering at that instant, with all the audacity of a man whose wages are in arrears, "there's been the very devil to pay on the second floor."

The clerk stared at him with haughtiness, which at another time might have been impressive.

"The fat man," went on the porter, unabashed, "him with the black suit and soft smile, has just been snatched up and run off on the train."

"Has he paid his bill?" demanded Mr. Devine, with a pale face.

"No baggage—paid in advance," said the clerk, curtly.

"What of him?" demanded Delmar.

"They say he is mad," explained the porter, "and two keepers came after him from the asylum. I thought myself he was rather queer."

Mr. Baxter looked at Delmar and Delmar looked at him.

Then they turned on their heels and departed, muttering—James Harvey Smith in The Epoch.

Summer's Food and Drink.

If any food or drink seems to disagree with you leave it off awhile, perhaps till the heat of the season is over, when you will find its relish no ways impaired for the slight abstinence. If coffee makes you stupid or headachy, quit it for lemonade. If sweets ferment, take to fruit, being very careful to choose only the most perfect quality and ripeness. And as you value your complexion or health, leave eggs and milk in every shape alone till frost comes again.

If you wish to gain plumpness, study variety in food—you must eat with appetite to grow good flesh. Through the summer let your fare consist of beef, mutton or chicken broths, free of the least fat, thickened with barley, sago or fine Italian pastes. Barley and the delicate preparations of corn and pearl hominy or farina are best for producing healthy plumpness. Oatmeal is not advisable in summer. A shepherd, out on the moors by night and day, leading a hardy life, may live on it the year round, but you cannot. Corn starch is clogging, as are all the fine preparations of grain. Cracked wheat, boiled three hours in plenty of water, eaten cold, with berries and sugar, is far better than milk for producing roundness of figure, and is a very different thing from the unwholesome paste presented at most tables.

Eat crusty bread, or graham crackers, baked over before coming to the table. The crust has more sugar and caramel developed in it by heat, and also secures thorough grinding by the teeth. Eat plenty of vegetables, fresh and well served; all the water cress, garden cress and crisp radishes you can secure being included. There is nothing like them for making a clear skin and bright eyes. Salmon, crab and chicken salads with mayonnaise are recommended for thin persons. Acidity of the stomach is fatal to hope of plumpness in a lean person, and must be prevented by brushing the teeth after eating and taking doses of lime water, not the sour lime, but the alkali, or, far better, fluid magnesia, not citrate of magnesia. You may drink a quart of lemonade in a half day of July, when the fluids of the body are flowing freely, and feel better for it every way. When the grapes ripen and the presses flow, you may live on fresh, unfermented grape juice, and grow round, symmetrical outlines to your heart's liking. But whether you are growing flesh or not, if you love your health, let milk and eggs alone till October.—Shirley Dars.

Japan's Wooden Water Pipes.

The water supply of Tokio, Japan, is by the wooden water pipe system, which has been in existence over 200 years, furnishing at present a daily supply of from twenty-five to thirty million gallons. There are several "water pipes in use, the principal class built up with plank, square, and so-called by frames surrounding them at intervals. The pipes less than six inches of bored logs, and somewhat made by placing a cap on the ends in which a very large groove has been cut. The connections are made by joints, and cracks are caulked with oak bark. Square boxes are used to regulate the uniformity of the water, which is rather purpose of preventing aquatic weeds from growing in the reservoirs on the sides of the pipe in number.—Scientific

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